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Huck Hayes, Alternative Energy Source, Board Member
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Dennis Giancola, H.P. Technologies, Board Member

Written Proponent Testimony – House Bill 260
Greg Bechert, Board Member, The EPO
Owner, Scioto Energy
House Public Utilities Committee
May 26, 2021

Chairman Hoops, Vice Chair Ray, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the committee thank you for the opportunity to submit written proponent testimony on HB 260. My name is Greg Bechert and I am an owner at Scioto Energy and a Board Member of the Energy Professionals of Ohio. The EPO thanks you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony today for House Bill 260, legislation that would allow for customer refunds of electric utility charges later found to be unlawful.

The members of the EPO help our clients navigate the complex world that is energy management. Contracts can be extremely challenging to understand, and customers no longer look for just the lowest price. The market has evolved to the point that energy management services including how a customer uses energy, energy efficiency, renewable energy, among other items are necessary in any successful energy management strategy. Because energy has become so complex, nearly two-thirds of all the energy purchased in Ohio goes through brokers to ensure contracts and risk management is tailored to each individual customer.

The premise behind HB 260 is simple – give customers back their money that was collected unlawfully. The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio does this for other utilities and Ohio's electric distribution utilities should not benefit from ill-gotten gains. Allowing for riders and other charges to be approved subject to refund will also slow the dramatic growth in riders Ohio's electric customer's have seen in the past decade as Ohio's EDU's will no longer be able to invent new riders with impunity and face no consequences should they be found unlawful.

HB 260 is common sense reform to a broken system. The EPO and its members urge your support.